

# OSWCA urges Queen's Park to support municipalities

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MISSISSAUGA, ONT.—The Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association (OSWCA) has submitted a set of pre-budget recommendations to the provincial government that call for more support to municipalities to save construction jobs.

“The OSWCA recommends the provincial government commit additional capital to municipalities so state-of-good-repair projects can continue to be tendered through 2022,” stated the submission, which was circulated by OSWCA manager of government and public affairs Steven Crombie.

Financial support provided by the province has helped accelerate economic recovery but the progress will be threatened if municipalities defer tenders in 2022 because of budget shortfalls, the statement said.

If even a third of projects are deferred, Ontario’s construction industry may lose at least 41,000 jobs, OSWCA said.

If continued COVID-19 funding is not forthcoming or adequate to fully address the financial impacts arising from the pandemic, the City of Toronto has said, the city's capital program will be impacted, with a potential cancellation of \$300 million in 2022 planned capital projects and \$1.08 billion in delayed capital funding for state of good repair projects.

The Financial Accountability Office of Ontario reported in 2021 that 45.3 per cent of municipal assets are not in a state of good repair.

The Region of Peel has also identified the need for increased resources to execute its capital plan, including a backlog of work due to COVID-19 impacts.

"This level of project deferral will lead to crumbling infrastructure and threaten tens of thousands of jobs across Ontario. The OSWCA urges the Province of Ontario, as they've done previously, to provide financial assurances to municipalities," stated OSWCA.